I was told that

765 the old man had chanted about the *Tarula*,[1]
533 who had planted magic on the beaches to
754 the north at the beginning of the wet season.
[648] The sun heated the magic, and up it went like smoke and the wind blew it all about. The magic works on the blackfellow with a feeling like a snake crawling up the legs. It moves up to his stomach, and when it reaches his heart he eats no more and dies. He also sang that he was an old man, his wind was short and soon he would die. Later he sang of a fight he had had with another tribe. Later he sang of people who came and fed him while he was sick. When standing in the water he was calling on the others to make the ceremony. When he threw up the stones he called *wei tua*, i.e " finish."

754 During the next four weeks I visited tribes in various parts of the islands and heard the same story. I was shown a sample of the magic. It was a tightly woven string bag about the size of a billiard ball and stuffed with kapok. This was said to have been " sung " before it was buried.

124 Statistics of the mortality of the epidemic
802 presented a problem. The only words for numbers which I could obtain with certainty

[1] The *tarula* were mainland blacks in the employ of local white men. They were called *tarula* (" lightning ") after the guns carried by their employers.

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were *yadi*, *irrara*, *irradroma*, *arkwawi* and *inalli*, respectively one, two, three, few and many. Some natives had a vague idea of five and ten. A nominal roll of the dead was impossible, as the names of the dead are *ardjidil*, "unlawful," "taboo." A method was arranged whereby flat sticks were used and notched. Separate sticks were taken for males and for females. A group would sit about and the dead identified by relationship with the living. A big notch in the sticks would be made for each adult, a smaller notch for a child, and a tiny notch for a baby. Records obtained in this way showed that at least 56 men, 87 women, 17 boys, 25 girls and one male and one female infant had died. The population of the islands, before the epidemic, was estimated as a result of general enquiries to be about 650, so the known death roll of 187 indicates a high mortality rate.

The original rumour suggested that the natives were dying of measles, as someone had diagnosed some illnesses at the Mission about Christmas time as measles. The extremely low number of infant deaths was entirely against measles being the cause of the holocaust, and supports the native diagnosis of magic.

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[p. 80-B]